Copyright © 2024 Christina Chin & Michael Hough

All rights reserved. This book or any portion thereof may not be reproduced or used in any manner whatsoever without the express written permission of the publishers, except for the use of brief quotations in a book review.

ISBN: 9798345800102

Nun Prophet Press

First Day of the Rest

a chapbook of Haibun and Haibunga collaborations

by *Christina Chin* & Michael Hough

Table of Contents

Dolphin Girl 01

Writing Ones and Zeroes 05

Growing Up. 06

Summer Nights in Ann Arbor 08

Before the Fires 09

A Dream Question 11

Before Moonrise 13

Steep Climb 15

Every Day is a Gift 16

The First Day of the Rest 18

Lockdown Eases Early 19

Walking After Sundown 21

Muscle Car Meditation . 23

Along These Edges . . . 26

Guitar Spirit 27

Face to Face 29

Calm Winds 31

Sugar Moon 33

Look At Me 34

Letting Go 35

Knock Three Times 37

Hooves and Horns Far Away 38

It Was Hard to Say 41

In the Morning 43

After the Storm 44

Sword Found by Hunters . . 45

Under the Waxing Apple Moon 48

Dark of the Moon 49

Some Things Change 51

Fire and Rain/Wind and Waves 53

Samhain Visit 55

Beachcombing on Monday 59

Exchanges at Dusk 61

Nocturnal 64

Under a Cheshire Moon 66

Dolphin Girl

Playing in heavy waves . . . like a Minoan bull dancer, she back flips in the curl. Seeing a wave rise and tower threateningly over her, she dives gracefully, emerging behind it, watching for the next one. She ignores the hapless boogieboarders thrown by the waves, buried in churning surf, and slammed to the bottom. Their boards pop out of the water without them.

She swims with no fins, no surfboard, just a fine strong stroke, perfectly at home in the sea. I am standing on the beach with my mother, watching with my sister and her husband. We pass the binoculars back and forth, amazed and delighted by this girl's strength and daring.

My sister and I have just come in from snorkeling the bay beyond the surf. The waves are so tall and menacing that my sense of wonder is sharpened by the relief I feel being back on land. Even with good fins on my feet, I felt overwhelmed and frightened by the power of the surge. We had swum out beyond the breaking waves, observing the coral and fish.

I could feel the surge under me as we tried to guess when to swim back to safety on the shore. I remember thinking: "Now! Here we go . . . I believe we're in between the big ones . . . If I guess wrong, these waves could batter us bloody and roll us through the sharp coral . . . "

Standing dry now on the beach, I can still feel the pull of the waves as I watch this fearless girl. She merrily dives through one wave, then swims backstroke across the crest of the next, and then stands up in the trough! Feet on the sand bar, hands on her hips, she saucily looks for the next roller, which looms over her like a house collapsing.

Choosing her moment perfectly, she stands on her hands, disappearing in the foam and showing her heels as the wave subsides around her. I put the binoculars down and clapped my hands in joy, happy that the waves that had spooked me so could be mastered by a smiling girl with such ease and grace. I was sorry I looked away then because the next wave shucked her out of her bikini, and she showed fine grace emerging from that one, holding on to just the strings. We all agreed she was much better off without it.

morning roar
an undercurrent
drags a sinking bikini

Writing Ones and Zeros

You go on... down the cold beach and write some profound poems in the sand with a driftwood stick. It might be as good as writing ones and zeros saved inside a cloud.

Oh, but who other than a poet knows this: Glory is fleeting like some smoke from your beach fire or the sound of drums echoing off cliffs.

blustery wind
this winter repeats
an old story

Growing Up

When I watch the little children's faces brimming with happiness while taking turns to mark their height on the chart, I remember how satisfied I was as a child when my mark inched up and was secretly proud to see my shadow longer than my other friend's. I would even stand on a stump or stone just to feel tall.

big feet in big boots . . .
my early shadow tapers
to a little head

Summer Nights in Ann Arbor

I remember living in an apartment when the movie theme from "Shaft" was popular. The walls were thin, and we could hear just about everything the other people in the building were up to. In addition, there was a resonance factor to the structure of this particular building, so that bass tones came through very strongly. I would lie awake at night listening to the sounds of the couple below us, mixed with the bass line of this song from someone else's apartment . . . ba bomp . . . . . bomp ba . . . . . bomp . . . . and on and on . . .

I can't find that house now.

Maybe someone burned it down . . . People used to smoke everywhere there, in their beds, on the porch. I've been walking so far, but I can't remember how to go back. It's so cold, my feet are cold. That must be an owl in the bare branches asking, "Who looks for you!" Maybe they painted the place. I might have walked right by. If I could just hear the music again or that woman down the hall with her strange laugh . . .

I don't know if that's the moon or a streetlight.

searching
for my childhood home
winter moon

Before the Fires

Willing but afraid, a young bird perches at the roof's edge with untested wings. Summer wind over new blossoms . . . horses grazing near, now a scent of rain. Mother snapper crawls slowly back to her chosen pond . . . egg laying done. The hawk drifts on an updraft and sees whatever dares move.

fallen seeds
on the gravel lane
sasanqua blooms

A Dream Question

Surely it was her voice that woke me yesterday . . . She said clearly, “Where did you put that?” It was definitely her voice . . . after so many months, of course I recognized her.

Jack the dog heard it, too. He sat right up in the bed, like I did. We looked at each other, and the expression on his face made me laugh, as I’m sure my sleepy mug amused him.

He yawned and said, “S’-argh.”

One of his ears was up, and one was inside out. He was thinking, “What the hell was that?” But he knew, even so.

Overhead, I could hear the sound of Air Force jet aircraft and a bit of morning traffic outside. Early light came through the window blinds. I said, “I don’t remember, babe . . .” and put my head back down on the pillow.

Jack curled himself against my chest and tucked himself into me . . . and sighed.

I laughed again, picturing the look on Jack’s face and the set of his ears when he heard the voice from the grave, the voice from my dream . . . and THAT made me realize I was awake and wanted coffee.

smoke alarm
the smell of breakfast
from my neighbour's suite

Before Moonrise

Catalina Foothills . . . sunset faded into dark—light traffic. Jack the dog was feisty and ready for adventure. I asked him where he wanted to go. He flapped his ears and led me up the mountainside under the light of so many stars.

company
the incessant buzz
of insects

Steep Climb

Today wanders between inspiration and regret with spirit searching for a path or a waypoint.

The sunset is painted in red smoke . . . and orange clouds from burning mountains miles away. Earlier, the smoke was yellow, and the clouds were white.

Drums echo in the canyon, speaking of what may be to come . . .

We make no reply. Spirit is a drum now, so we listen.

slash-and-burn
haze the smell
of ash

Every Day is a Gift

And so is every evening . . . like this one when the waning quarter moon rises in a clear desert sky . . . and the twinkling lights of the city carry on about their business far down on the flatlands below. High above, the lamps of an aircraft blink on and off. Here on the mountainside, the wind whispers its secrets among thorny branches of mesquite and saguaro.

Earth Hour
the skyline
d i m s

The First Day of the Rest

By now we have
returned home. You
moved over and made
some room, reserving
questions for later. My
vigil and quest are
complete. I washed
off the smoke and am
warming beside you.

love on a full moon night
shooting stars
explode

Lockdown Eases Early

Time crawls and lurches to a silent dawn, no drums: The early sky is a new mystery . . .

Now I hear the first bird.

We remain quiet. Our hands link fingers. Today will be another challenge . . . Renewed, I hum softly, nose pointed upward. You join with a harmony as our new tasks begin.

timer sprinkler
the same sunbird
sings for water

Walking After Sundown

The neighbors were pretty quiet too.
…except for some people drumming in
a firelit circle hidden by a grove of trees.
That made a fine throb and pulse and
we tramped along for a couple of hours
after leaving the drumming behind..
Of course it was 11:30 p.m. on Rocky
Mountain time when we got back.
Everyone seemed to have settled down
by then. That suited us just fine.
We were walking for joy, and because
we COULD do it, listening to the wind
and the night sounds.

hitting the pillow
a last game of sudoku
before lights off

Muscle Car Meditation

Cars were like religion when I was a young teen.

"Little GTO, you're really lookin' fine Three deuces and a four-speed and a 389" -Ronnie and the Daytonas

Q: Which came first, the GTO song or the 409 song . . .
A: If you don't remember, it doesn't matter.

As a young buck, I took a dim view of both these idiot songs, feeling that they should be paired on the air with Deadman's Curve and Tell Laura I Love Her.

All I had was a bicycle, a used 3-speed I bought for $10 at the pawnshop. I bought that bike with the money I earned carrying golf bags for guys that drove Cadillacs.

a straight putt
on the tenth green
in the bunker

I learned how to drive and passed my driver's test in my dad's 1960 Chevy Brookwood station wagon, with a straight six-cylinder engine, three-speed manual transmission with the shift lever on the steering column, an AM radio, a stamped steel dashboard with no padding, bench seats, no seat belts or safety equipment of any kind, retread tires and power nothing. No AC . . . but the heater worked.

two girls squeezed into the bench
seat the radio blasts
Heartaches
by the Number

The expression "roll down the window" came from the hand cranks we used. The expression "stood on the brakes" came from the drum brakes these cars were equipped with . . . and the lack of hydraulic assist. I've always thought it was a wonder any of us survived, including the muscle car crowd.

half a dozen kids
packed in grandad's Holden
movie night

Gibson

Along these Edges

Widowed and quarantined, I prepare a meal of necessities. It's little enough. Soon, shadows in the stones turn to blue as dark walks through and bird voices dwindle . . . A night wind rustles in the Pinyon and Palo Verde. But the dreams may come again. I can't stay still. Maybe I can exhale them into the air.

autumn sun
sinks into the volcano
a hint of smoke

My totem, my guide along these edges: Owl speaks with authority, and village dogs begin to bark. Owl flies ahead, and we follow, hoping to find wisdom. Margaret keeps an eye on me from next door. She lost someone, too. The crescent moon has set, and now a clear late-night sky prevails. Dog and man walk together by starlight. My boots crunch in the gravel, and my dog's nails dig into the surface of this path. It gleams faintly tonight. We will walk steadily for a bit more, then perhaps sleep without dreaming.

tapping her fingers
on the windowsill
waiting for the gate

Guitar Spirit

This cool stone bench warms in
morning sun: the level beams reach
between cactus. Blue shadows
shorten and change color, and a
winter wind curls in my beard.
The thin sun warms my face and
pulls a song out of Spirit into my
lungs, and then to the sky with my
voice. Spirit is a wolf today. Time
flows like a dry river and my dog
lies down beside my feet.
By noonday: the wind stops… I am
tired. Birds and insects all sit still
just to catch a breath.

busker's song
keeps repeating
in my head

Face to Face

"Oh, my God . . . is it really you?"
" . . . Yes . . . I was hoping it was you in that shell."
"It's me, and I remember everything."
"So do I . . ."
"So . . . like, all that nonsense they told us about reincarnation turned out to be true, didn't it?"
"It seems like it now."
"That's a lot to think over, especially when our brains are so small."
"I know, I know . . . but what else are we here for?"
"Well, I have to crawl down . . . I can't stay here all morning. It's unbearable when the sun is too bright."
"I'll meet you here tomorrow morning then. Will you come?"
"It will take me all night to climb up here, but I'll do it. . . . because, like, how long do we live in these shapes?"
"I dunno . . . a couple of weeks for me maybe."
"I think I get a little more. I've grown around this shell a whole turn and a half since Spring."
"You go, girl! . . . you are, like, still a girl, aren't you?"
"In this form, we're all kind of half-and-half. I know it sounds weird." "I won't kick you out of the flower bed . . . " *laughs
"I'll see you tomorrow, I hope. You be careful. There's a toad under the third brick in the wall. You would NOT believe how long his tongue is."

"Yes, I would. I've seen him absolutely shred a bumblebee that didn't know he was there. It was horrible, except that I hate bumblebees. And you might want to step it up and go . . . there's a possum that lives behind the tool shed."
"Yeah . . . bad news . . . I have to keep a low profile around that one. I hunker down and pretend to be a wad of old chewing gum. But hey! Listen! Maybe you can scout this out for me! I was down by the pond yesterday morning and saw this BIG catalpa leaf right at the water's edge. I think it would hold me like a boat. And if you came and perched on the stem and fanned your wings a bit, we might sail out to that little island in the pond. We'd be safe there, wouldn't we? No possums or toads, or kitties . . . "
"Oh, babe . . . you don't know about the bullfrog."
"Oh, My Gawd, is that what makes that noise?" "I'm afraid so . . . top of the food chain on that island anyway. There are also some big bass in that pond. I've seen them lurking."
"Shit . . . I was hoping . . . "
"I know. But I'll wait for you tomorrow morning, right here."
"Good . . . I still love you, did you know?"
"Yes, it's written on your shell in letters only I can see. And when my wings get really going, they make the sound of your name as I remember it. I will always love you, no matter what."
"Thanks for that. Wait for me . . . It might take me a long time . . ."
"Yes, it always did . . . "

Calm Winds

Clear sky, cool air: a quiet evening on the volcano . . . maybe 65 degrees, a perfect night for anything. We walked several miles up and down some residential roads, ending up at the top of La Paloma, a VERY exclusive place to live. The higher we walked, the more we could see the glow behind us . . .

sidewalk cracks
wild pansies kiss
and nod

Sugar Moon

The moon was rising over the Rincon mountains to the East as we looked between the trees. The moonrise was so dramatic, I was astonished that it made no sound . . .

It should have been Glory and Trumpets. But nothing happened . . . We met no one. No lions or javelinas, no coyotes or bobcats. No angels descended, just clear and silver light as we stayed together. Tonight, even the wind was without a voice. We walked quietly, of course.

sudden shuffle
a gecko falls off
the branch

Look At Me

Biak, a smallish seven year
old boy down the village road
enjoys spinning incredible
stories.
Yesterday he said he saw a
child's severed hand in the
monsoon drain, while looking
down from the school bus.
The children curled up their
legs and little Botut cried.
Today I walked there with
him, but we could not find
it. He was quiet on the way.

little spiderhunter
hang your nest using
strings I threw away

Letting Go

Out of the blue, grandpa arranged an unchaperoned trip for my older teenage cousin Neely and me to visit Buntal, his coconut estate at the estuary of vast blue sea and sky.

When we arrived, welcoming faces greeted us from the sunny dock, a community made up of the plantation caretakers' families. When the riverboat engine stopped, I heard a generator, and as we walked to the house, the sound became louder.

When I explored the kitchen, I learnt the white fridge runs on a black motor. Here will be my first experience of rural coastal living. White sand on my feet, red estuarine crabs and striped tiger prawns tickle my toes. Hidden behind the purple rhododendron bush, a wild boar ready to charge.

collapsing sandbar
I run fast across
barefoot

Knock Three Times

I have great neighbours. I'm sure you do, too. Karna is my neighbour's maid. They're both over 80 years old, generous and kind. She always drops in with portions of aromatic curry for lunch. Paer is a restless Army retiree who loves to cook and share his exotic food. Paer's wife Rani tells him to knock three times and leave it in my hanging basket. He knocks three times and another three. I know that's him. I can smell the garlic.

a little house
among mushrooms
music under the stars

A Sound of Hooves and Horns Far Away

Look! . . . across the Glen . . . Do you see those distant wrinkles on the greening hills? They are the grass-grown earthworks of my ancestors . . . Spring may never come to some dark hollows where my own people left their bones. There is a melancholy that creeps across these places like mist.

ancestral worship
incense blackens
the altar wall

I have stood on windy hilltops by moonlight . . . I have seen cold stones glitter in frost turning to dew. Moon of Storms! Promise us only change as we children make this pilgrimage. My folk never cared whose flag flew above the fortress . . . Seasons change again.

thermal updrafts
the raptors crossing
continents

Sing me an old song . . . Listen to the wind between stones. I will make a fire, and you may play my drum. I am only partly here: even though I seethe with the blood of old foes, I am no stranger. The blood of all the warring bands is mixed in me, and so I am the peace.

cross culture
in the melting pot
accents

My language now blends with that of our conquerors . . . and our slave mother's tears are invoked in the song we sing. So the castle falls: and we who remember . . . ignore the kings, as ever. This morning, there is a hush over these hills, and a scent of change drifts on wisps of smoke from peat fires. Last night, the Moon of Storms came to the half.

zoom dialects
the tutor adapts
a haiku

It Was Hard to Say

In my dream, you were lithe and lively and made small sounds of joy. I said, "I need a hug," and you melted into me like honey melts into my tea. We held each other so close it was hard to say where my life began, and yours led away.

It was such a gift . . . I am still shivering from it as I sit on a cold stone bench this morning with my dog at my feet . . . waiting for the winter sun.

stolen kiss
on a crowded street
firecrackers

In the Morning

Fire on the Mountain: a distant glow in a dark sky. We drove up into the foothills to get a closer look. It was hard to tell how far away it was, but when we got clear of trees and streetlights, the glow was eerie and shifting. Steep stone cliffs reflected light from flames we could not see. For me, the most remarkable feature was the patterns of shadow on the rock walls . . . Maybe the moving shadows were from smoke or maybe from Dragon Wings. I could not say.

We watched for a time, fascinated. There was no sound. No firemen came, no aircraft dumped loads of fire retardant. Life seemed to go on normally in the city below. We drove home under a rising moon that emerged over a ridge to the East. We went home to bed and in the morning, my dog and I walked out to see the mountain unperturbed, with only the merest wisps of smoke far off.

directing the traffic
of migrating birds—
a hatty scarecrow

After the Storm

Tonight, there is a half-moon's light over the crusted snow and above: the glittering stars through the cold clear air. No clouds, it is a windless evening . . .

Far off, we hear the sounds of engines roaring and see the headlamps of snow machines weaving through the trees. Traffic on the road tonight is sparse, so we walk peacefully under the light of stars and moon, enjoying the cold and the dark.

When I look up, I remember that I have not done so in too long . . . and this clear night sky provides a window into the endless cold and starlit deeps of space.

forest creaking
as the wind moves
aeolian tones

1200-year-old Sword Found by Goose Hunters

Well, that's my sword, of course . . . I left it there, intending to return to put it back in my saddle's protective wrap. I was just going to look, that's all, just a peek inside this doorway kind of thing, in a mysterious mound. I was curious, but I believed bringing a sword into a magical place wasn't a good idea. It might be misunderstood by whoever was in there. I shouldn't have drunk the mead they offered me.

teetotaler
I pledge to accept only
as medicine

I had hobbled my horse out in the meadow so she wouldn't wander far, and she allowed it, alas. If my old sword looks as rust-eaten as that, then Windfola's bones must have crumbled to nothing long ago. Really, I just peered in that little doorway and saw there was a party going on. They all beckoned to me and invited me in. I danced with lovely Moira, and someone handed me an Aurochs horn with mead in it . . .

intoxication
my spirit in another
realm

. . . The next thing I knew, it was 1953, and I was five. I've been trying to figure out what happened ever since. It has taken me a lifetime to remember, and I still don't have all the pieces to the puzzle.

tying bootlaces
mother holds
my skinny hands

The sword's name is Truthgiver . . . I can tell you that. She was light and flexible in a fight and never let me down. I was the one who walked away from her, never to return. I'll bet a sack of hack silver that Moira has the scabbard still . . . except I don't have any more of that. There's strong magic in the scabbard. She knew. She didn't like the steel in the sword, but the scabbard was bronze and leather, with a little silver wire decoration.

songs of a meadowlark
wildflowers twine
the ancient hilt

Even Under the Waxing Apple Moon

Today, I found a tan and black moth on my kitchen window frame in the September morning light. I reached for the lovely and fragile creature, and it flew into my fist. I curled my fingers lightly around the moth and took it out on the front porch.

I whispered, "Go with God, and may I find aid in unexpected places . . . " I am NOT expecting any over-large eagles to arrive dramatically, but one never knows. The moth flew out of my fingers and went to find a mate . . . and maybe some breakfast . . .

atlas moths
at the Drunken Sailor
blossoms, intoxicated

Dark of the Moon

Walking with my dog along a deserted road last night, the stars were so clear we could see by them and the air so still we could hear stirrings of night creatures in the woods to either side . . .

ancient cemetery . . .
the wind sprites
restless

We could hear the crackle of a neighbor's bonfire and the laughter of a few rowdies . . . the skush sound of a can of beer and the snort of a joke. Off in another direction, the voices of a pair of cranes speaking to each other in quiet tones. I've heard them do this before and am always charmed. I feel that they were talking softly in the dark as couples do.

reincarnation . . .
as fate would have them
meet again

Jack was a city dog before being rescued, and all this is very new to him. He knows quite well that the world is dangerous, but these new sounds and smells unnerve him. He doesn't know how dangerous they might be.

pitch black . . .
the hickory path
a chuck-will's-widow

Further along the road, the weird call of the Screech Owl gave me shivers, as it always does. The Screech Owl's call, a high, lonely wavering wail continued until silenced by four gruff and peremptory woofs of a Great Horned Owl.

nervous expiration
steam mists
the glasses

The Horned Owl sent us home with another four low tones: Hoot, Hoot . . . Hoot-Hoot. We walked back in companionable silence . . .

a dark moon
under the crisp light
of stars

Some Things Change

Blue mist above a cityscape . . . Sundown blends it in a gradient: orange into dusty blue and city lights beginning . . . Late moon oversees what we know of love and what we bring to loved ones . . . Oh, the same moon for us all.

Smoke hangs in layers . . . puffs from some evening gossipers . . . Tell me tomorrow then . . . maybe I won't care.

This night's emotions must sort themselves . . . I cannot force them into place. No wizardry gives any sense to the end of today: only a sunset, darkening . . .

thunderclaps
rainwater gushes
into a harvester

Fire and Rain/Wind and Waves

Morning light smiles after a fire circle that burned late and sent our wishes and hopes high into the night sky. We fed fears and regrets into the fire with driftwood, and they were transformed into a column of smoke and sparks . . . The smoke was bent toward the East by a wind from dark forests and cold streams. The wind brought the scents of pine needles, new leaves, deep water, and wet stones.

moving mountains
a glistening jewel
scarab

Rain came about midnight and carried the sound of distant music but no thunder. The rain fell most of the night and gave us the hissing of tires on the highway and wind in the evergreens above our roof. The wind pushed all this out over the Lake, and the waves did not bring anything back.

bullfrogs
in the rushes . . .
a boom of mating calls

When the wind is from the forest, the waves are small and quiet, and the Lake will take all it is offered. We are careful to offer only good things on nights like that. A fire helps to make it so. Rain washes leaves and grasses clean and puts out the fire. Now, the world sparkles in the smiles of morning light. I will make some tea.

empty container
the smell of cupcakes
in the dog's breath

Samhain Visitation

The first quarter moon is shining through gaps in the blinds and making a silver grid on the floor. My old dog Kody, who passed away years ago, pushes the bedroom door open by giving it a shove with her nose. As she comes into the bedroom in the moonlight, I can see her smile. She really used to do this.

a curved
furball snugs
close

She learned that grinning was a greeting (among humans) when still a puppy and did it for her whole life. If she showed her teeth to a dog, she was standing her ground. But if she did it when approaching a human, it was a greeting and sincerely meant. A highly intelligent dog with a lovely and sweet disposition. I miss her deeply, can you tell?

touching
familiar things . . .
thoughts

So she enters my bedroom in the moonlight and grins to let me know it really is her and gives me a push with her nose to make sure I am awake. She stands up, paws on the bed, to show me her hips are no longer weak and sore, and turns around several times to let me see she is comfortable.

She comes back to my bedside to let me hear that her breathing is sound again. She shakes herself as if to show me that the bell I hung from her collar no longer annoys her. She gives me one lick on my chin and trots out into a square of moonlight in the hallway and disappears.

rousing shouts
the smoke of charred
stew on low flame

Beachcombing on Monday

Restless imagination can soar like a gull above our shore. An author can find anything. A student might learn something . . . Oh, here is someone's book . . . pages wrinkled with damp and packed with sand . . . a former summer blockbuster lies abandoned on this beach.

A girl's footprints dance by and spin . . . deep toe holes and blurred heels . . . There is joy in the tracks she made. Turns and leaps are easy to see. Her gestures and music can be imagined. She had no need to pause and examine a soggy book.

Dog tracks dodge and jump (for something) but do not fetch. Waves reach for the book again and again but not far enough. Once there was a castle here . . . We should make a fire.

stretched
on a beach chair
lost in stars

Exchanges at Dusk

Sitting on the porch at the end of a muggy day, we talk of small things in quiet tones, listening to a concert of bird calls. We become aware that a pair of Sandhill Cranes, nesting in the wetland less than two hundred meters from us, are doing the same thing.

Swamp creatures enjoy a cool sunset just as we do. We can hear the big birds speaking to each other in conversational tones, only a fraction as loud as they can be. Their conversation goes on like ours does until dusk deepens and the first mosquito songs begin.

zinging
in my ears
cicadas

Nocturnal

Leaving the porch light on for visitors usually means we get beautiful moths clustered about the front door and lamp. They come from the dark, attracted by the light. I am fascinated by them. Some, of course, are drab gray, but others show colors I could never see at night.

nocturnal perfume
caterpillars invade
the Rangoon vine

Under a Cheshire Moon

Now the moon turns our season. Now the waters and winds wait for what will come . . .

Oh, tales the Comet told: Death to Royalty...first this, then this, then that. Oh, but thee and me under such a moon tonight: We could make something more than drums of Babylon . . . more than changing a season. Sunset fades behind your mountains. Sand and stone begin to cool.

Owl wakes early this night.

a scent
of sandalwood
ambrosial hour

Acknowledgments

Thanks to the editors who first featured some or part of these poems in their publications!

Prune Juice, Cattails, Cantos, Blōō Outlier, HiveMind, Pangolin Review, Drifting Sands, Bamboo Hut, Fireflies's Light, Quills, Failed Haiku, The Hooghly Review, Poetry Pea Journal, Synchronized Chaos, Roadside Raven Review

Christina Chin is a painter and haiku poet from Malaysia. She is a four-time recipient of top 100 in the mDAC Summit Contests, exhibited at the Palo Alto Art Center, California. 1st prize winner of the 34th Annual Cherry Blossom Sakura Festival 2020 Haiku Contest. 1st prize winner in the 8th Setouchi Matsuyama 2019 Photo-haiku Contest. She has been published in numerous journals, multilingual journals, and anthologies, including Japan's prestigious monthly Haikukai Magazine.

Michael Hough is a retired musician and professional photographer with decades of experience in both careers. He toured as a member of the Mustards Retreat folk group for 44 years. He lives in Northern lower Michigan, where he continues to write poetry across several genres, songs, and short fiction. He has been a writer since high school.